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# **Golf Course Equipment Basics: Winter Storage**

This article explore the things a golf course manager should do to ensure that a lawn mower or cart will start up when winter is over and the equipment gets used again.

golf cart small engines, small engine rebuild kit, small engines

Small engine vehicles, like golf carts, lawn mowers and trucksters, need the same care and maintenance as a car or truck. Owners tend to forget that putting a golf cart or mower away for the winter requires the same care as if you were planning to store a vehicle for an extended amount of time. Too often carts are stored away in some corner of the garage without much thought given to how well they will start up when the weather improves. Golf cart owners figure that hiding them away in a shed or garage, clear from the winter elements is sufficient. Not quite. Even if your golf cart or mower is new, they still require some maintainance. In fact, getting them to start up trouble-free from season to season requires you follow a few points of due-diligence.

First, gather up the equipment you will need to properly put your golf cart in storage for the winter. This equipment includes a wrench, a few bottles of distilled water, some cleaning rags, gloves for you, goggles for your eyes, a hydrometer (it measures the gravity of the electrolyte solution) and a voltmeter (to measure voltage). You may want to throw in some baking soda and vaseline as well.

The following are measures you can take to ensure your golf cart or course mower starts up again as spring comes around.

1. Read the manufacturer's maintenance guide

Follow the manufacturer's instructions. Don't try to tinker with the small engine if you've never handled one before. If you notice anything unusual, take your golf cart or mower to the nearest dealer for an inspection. Don't wait until spring to have your small engine checked.

2. Remove the battery

Before storing your golf mower or cart for the winter, remove the battery and disconnect it from the battery cable. Store your battery in a safe place, away from heated elements, gas or furnace. Wipe it clean and brush off the battery terminal with a metal brush. Check for any cracks or borken elements. If the manufacturer recommends special cleaning solutions for your battery, give it a good cleaning before putting it away. If there are no spcial instructions, distilled water should do the trick. Avoid using corrosive cleaning chemicals. Most golf cart or mower problems are due to poorly maintained batteries.

3. Store in a safe, covered location

Store your golf cart or mower away from heaters, furnaces and gas containers. Also ensure that it is not place near any open windows where water damage may occur.

4. Put it away clean

Clean your cart or mower before storing it. Wash off any leaves, grass, residual soil, dried or wet mud, and moisture pockets from both the main exterior and underneath. Wipe off grass and dirt from around the blade using a long-handled brush - Do not use your bare hands! When you clean your mower, unplug the spark plug lead wire, wind it up gently and tape it together.

5. Remove remaining fuel

You should finish off any fuel that is remaining in your tank (if it uses fuel) or add a fuel preserver before storage. Read the instructions for the fuel preserver carefully before using. After adding it plug your mower or cart and let the engine run for a few minutes. This should give the fuel preserver enough time to go through the carburetor. One good thing about fuel preservers (also called stabilizers) is that they keep the fuel fresh in the engine for as long as half a year. You can now turn off the engine.

Follow these simple steps for storage and your golf cart or mower will start up in a snap.

~ Ben Anton, 2008

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